



**NATIONAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE  
ADVISORY COUNCIL**



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June 25, 2002

Administrator Christine Todd Whitman  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Whitman:

Please find attached a copy of the report entitled **“National Environmental Justice Advisory Council’s Report on Integration of Environmental Justice in Federal Agency Programs, May 2002.”**

EPA, through its Office of Environmental Justice, requested the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) in its meeting of December 11 - 14, 2000 to provide advice and recommendations on federal government efforts toward integrating environmental justice into agency policies, programs, and activities consistent with the existing laws and Executive Order (E.O.) 1998. The NEJAC believes that this report has special significance for the EPA. EPA chairs the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG), which was established by E.O. 12898.

In short, this report reflects the advice and recommendations that resulted from pre-meeting preparation (i.e., interviews), on-site discussions, public comments and subsequent analysis. The breath of the discussions is exemplified by individuals and/or organizations that either provided comments, suggestions or recommendations on the importance of interagency strategies and coordination for achieving environmental justice across the federal family.

This report proposes five overarching recommendations to the EPA as follows:

- (1) Support advancement of the Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Environmental Justice Action Agenda and its collaborative interagency problem-solving model as exemplified in the fifteen demonstration projects.
- (2) Continue individual agency-specific implementation of environmental justice.
- (3) Explore and identify ways for greater use of legal authorities and removal of regulatory impediments to achieve environmental justice.

(4) Ensure that, in the case of federally-recognized tribes including Alaska Native villages, integration of environmental justice into agency policies, programs, and activities is consistent with federal trust responsibility to tribes, recognized principles of tribal sovereignty, and the government-to-government relationship with tribes.

(5) Collaborate in identifying specific focus areas or target programs where application of environmental justice principles could significantly benefit communities.

The NEJAC is pleased to present this report to you for your review, consideration, response and action. In addition, we request that you forward this report to your counterparts with other relevant federal agencies.

Sincerely,

Peggy M. Shepard  
Chair